



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities**

Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

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www.gov.uk/dluhc

Mr Owen Boswarva



Date: **23 August 2022**

Dear Mr Boswarva,

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - 18881014

Thank you for your request for information which was received on 26 June 2022 and has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

I would like to make a new information request. This request also relates to DCLG's 2016 consultation 'Strengthening Local Government Transparency: Consultation on changes to the Local Government Transparency Code 2015'.

Please provide the following information:

- 1. The number of responses received to the consultation.*
- 2. A list of organisations that submitted responses to the consultation.*
- 3. A copy of any response received from the Cabinet Office.
Please also provide, if held:*
- 4. Any breakdown or analysis of responses to the questions in the consultation.*
- 5. The most recent unpublished version or draft of any consultation outcome or Government response to the consultation.*
- 6. Any correspondence, meeting minutes, or other record that relates to the decision not to publish the outcome of the consultation.*

1.-2.

We can confirm that this information is held by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and we are able to provide you with this information. Please see the enclosed spreadsheet.

3.

Information not held.

4.-6.

We can confirm that this information is held by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, however this information is exempt from disclosure under section 35(1)(a) of the FOI Act as it relates to the development of government policy.

Information falling within this exemption must still be provided unless it is not in the public interest to do so.

There will always be some general public interest in the disclosure of internal government information in order to promote transparency and accountability of public authorities. The Department recognises that this allows for the scrutiny of government policy and decision-making processes.

However, regarding the exemption at section 35(1)(a), the Department must also consider the public interest which lies in maintaining a “safe space” in which officials and Ministers are able to reach policy decisions away from external interference and distraction. Disclosure of this internal information would unacceptably erode into the aforementioned “safe space” and is liable to cause a “chilling effect” on general policy making. This “chilling effect” relates to the notion where under the impediment of distraction, policy officials and Ministers may feel less able to participate in free, frank, and objective discussions regarding any information and advice put before them.

We have therefore decided that, on balance, it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this time.

In addition, some of this information contains personal data. This information is exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the FOI Act as it is personal, about another individual and, as that person could not reasonably expect that his or her personal information would be disclosed, doing so would breach UK data protection legislation.

Complaints procedure

If you are unhappy with this response, we will review it and report back to you. (This is called an internal review.) If you want us to do this, let us know by return email within two months of receiving this response. You can also ask by letter addressed to:

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Knowledge and Information Access Team
4th Floor SE, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

If you are unhappy with the outcome of this internal review, you can ask the independent Information Commissioner to investigate. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at email address casework@ico.org.uk or use their online form at ico.org.uk/concerns or call them on 0303 123 1113.

Kind regards,

Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities FOI Team